



levels of policy. The following definitions of terms provide guidance in interpreting the policy language of the General Plan:

- *Shall*: Policies containing the word “shall” indicate that an action must be taken in all cases. This represents absolute commitment to the policy, and the expectation is that the policy will always be carried out.
- *Should*: Policies containing the word “should” indicate that an action will be taken in most cases, but exceptions are acceptable for good reason.
- *Allow*: Policies containing the word “allow” indicate that a proposed action will be supported within certain parameters and following certain guidelines.
- *Coordinate*: Policies containing the word “coordinate” indicate that an action will occur along with some other entity, and the County will carry its share of the burden or responsibility.
- *Explore*: Policies containing the word “explore” indicate that an action will be taken to investigate the subject at hand to discover whether or not some further commitment is in order.
- *Consider*: Policies containing the word “consider” indicate that an action may or may not be taken, depending upon the results of analysis that remain to be completed.
- *Limit*: Policies containing the word “limit” indicate that an action will be taken to keep the subject within certain limits, or at least operate to make undesired change more difficult.
- *Restrict*: Policies containing the word “restrict” indicate that an action will be taken to actively keep the undesired action to a minimum.

Where other action terms are used that are not specified here, they are to be equated to the closest applicable term described above.

GENERAL PLAN & AREA PLANS RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS AND REGULATIONS

A number of plans and ordinances implement or are impacted by the County’s General Plan:

Zoning Ordinance - The County administers its General Plan primarily through its Zoning Ordinance. While the General Plan identifies land use designations in the long-term, zoning identifies specific, immediate uses of land. The General Plan’s successful implementation can only occur if the County Zoning Ordinance is updated and consistent with it (State law mandates General Plan-Zoning consistency), and is able to implement the long-term intent of the Plan.

Subdivision Ordinance - State law mandates local approval of land subdivision via the Subdivision Map Act. Local review of proposed subdivisions and parcel maps includes assessment of consistency with, and implementation of, General Plan objectives and policies.

Specific Plans - Specific plans are customized regulatory documents in lieu of standard zoning that are used to plan projects and delineate land uses, infrastructure, development standards and criteria, and implementation measures.



Specific plans must address consistency with the jurisdiction's General Plan, and can be used to implement the General Plan within a limited area.

Development Agreements - Development agreements are entered into by developers and local governments. These agreements define permitted uses of property, density and intensity of uses, development criteria, and provisions for the reservation or dedication of land for public purposes. They are in effect for predetermined periods of time and identify vested development rights that apply to the specific development project they govern. Development agreements assure that general plan objectives and policies are carried as development occurs; however, unincorporated territory can be governed by development agreements with cities, subject to annexation, if the property is within the city's sphere of influence.

Transit Village Plans - The Transit Village Planning Act of 1994 authorizes cities and counties to prepare Transit Village Plans to encourage compact, mixed use development in close vicinity to transit stations. A transit village plan must be consistent with the county general plan. A county adopting a transit village plan is eligible for State transportation funds, will receive priority help from the Office of Permit Assistance in establishing a streamlined permitting process, and may be excluded from conformance with county Congestion Management Plan level-of-service standards with the approval of the Congestion Management Agency.

JURISDICTIONAL SYSTEM

The following types of plans and designations, though administered by other jurisdictions, can also impact the County's General Plan:

City General Plans - City General Plans have authority over territory within city limits. This General Plan only has jurisdiction over unincorporated territory within the County of Riverside that is under the authority of the Board of Supervisors. Land within a city's sphere of influence (see definition below) can be given land use designations by both the city and the county. The city's designation applies if the land is annexed into the city, otherwise the county's designation prevails.

City Spheres of Influence - Spheres of influence are established by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and are intended to reflect "the probable physical boundaries and service area" of cities. LAFCO is directed by State law (the Cortese/Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 1985, as amended) to establish and periodically review the spheres of influence for each agency under its jurisdiction.

Communities of Interest (COI) - The Riverside County LAFCO may designate Community of Interest study areas within the County of Riverside unincorporated territory. Proponents of the designation are given two years to evaluate long-term jurisdictional alternatives and submit a summary report to the Commission. Alternative courses of action within this time frame could include annexation to one or more cities or special districts, incorporation as a new city, or the long-term designation of Unincorporated Community. During the study period, piecemeal annexations are strongly discouraged.